

**Town of Chester
Conservation Commission
December 11, 2018
7:00 PM
Approved Minutes**

Present:

Chairman Chuck Myette
Deb Munson
Kristina Snyder
Victor Chouinard
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale

Absent:

Selectmen Liaison Joseph Hagan
Ted Broadwater
Baron Richardson
Aaron Hume

Guests:

Eversource, Tighe-Bond

Call to Order:

Chairman Myette called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Chairman Myette directed that the active alternates would be Kristina Snyder and Victor Chouinard.

Old Business

1. Review Minutes (November 13, 2018)

Ms. Snyder corrected the spelling of Mr. Schadler and Mr. Kilham on Line 105 and 107.

Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale motioned to approve the minutes of November 13, 2018 as amended. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

- A. Strategic Land Protection Committee (Chuck)

Pulpit Rock Road

Chairman Myette advised he has had continuing discussions with Mr. MacLean.

Raymond Road

Chairman Myette advised the BOS is considering the Warrant Article and has heard nothing new.

B. Treasurer's Report (Baron) BILLS

Chairman Myette advised there was \$75,533.53 in the Conservation account (not including the c/d), \$40,559.80 in the Forestry account, \$10,059.67 in the Emerson account and \$3,041.44 in the Lincoln Lane account. The balance of the CD is \$705,905.46.

Chairman Myette reported \$4,930.00 spent. \$4,800 for the survey for the Edward's easement. This should come from the Conservation 04 account and Ms. Duffy has cleared that up. \$455 were spent on dues and seminars. There is an invoice for \$583 from Rockingham County Conservation. \$282 is for annual monitoring of the Scott Root Farm easement and \$301 for the Wilson Farm easement annual monitoring.

Mr. Chouinard moved to approve the payment of \$583.00 to Rockingham County Conservation, 2nd by Ms. Munson, with all in favor, so moved.

Chairman Myette presented a copy of the invoice from the Rockingham Registry of Deeds for recording of the Chouinard easement in the amount of \$115.84.

Ms. Munson motioned to approve the payment of \$115.84 to the Rockingham County Registry of Deeds, 2nd by Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale, with all in favor, so moved.

Chairman Myette presented a copy of the invoice from Farm Credit East for the appraisal of the Pulpit Rock Road property in the amount of \$1,600.00.

Ms. Munson motioned to approve payment of \$1,600.00 to Farm Credit East, 2nd by Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale, with all in favor, so moved.

Chairman Myette presented a copy of a request from American Forest Foundation for a donation and subscription. Ms. Munson stated that she is a member. The Commission agreed to keep a copy of their magazine at the library and discuss with the Trustees the possibility of putting together a display. Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale recommended a modest donation of \$25.00.

Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale moved to approve the donation of \$25.00 to the American Forest Foundation, 2nd by Ms. Snyder, with all in favor, so moved.

Chairman Myette presented a copy of a request from Southeast Land Trust for membership renewal, donation in the amount of \$100.00.

Ms. Snyder moved to approve payment of the renewal of the Southeast Land Trust membership, 2nd by Mr. Chouinard, with all in favor, so moved.

Mr. Chouinard motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report, as stated. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

C. Planning Board (Chuck)

D. Trails (Aaron) – Tabled

E. Spring Hill Farm & Advisory Committee (Chuck)

Chairman Myette advised that he was unable to attend. Ms. Hoijer advised that members were nominated and will be voted in at the next meeting. Restoration of the existing barn was discussed as an upcoming project.

F. Agricultural Commission (Chuck)

Chairman Myette advised the Agricultural Commission did not meet last month.

G. Regulations

H. Grants – Trails Grant

I. -Wason Pond Conservation Area (Chuck/Kathy)

Chairman Myette advised Wason Pond Commission did not meet this month.

J. Easements, Monitoring & Stewardship (RCCD) – List of Easements

Chairman Myette provided an updated copy of the spreadsheet which totaled 40 or so easements. The next step will be to make a list of which properties have a baseline and when they were last monitored.

Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale asked what kind of information is in the baseline and monitoring reports. Chairman Myette explained there is a copy of the easement itself, a review sheet, pictures, descriptions, unusual concerns, monumentation and basic information.

Chairman Myette summarized the list with Pipit Estates not finalized yet and seven or eight that are not recorded yet. Would like to review the Hazelton Fire access easement. The Natural Area is the property near the school donated by Gladys Nichols and is to remain in its natural state with no agricultural use.

Plan Reviews

1. Eversource

Matt Cardin from Eversource stated that he was present to obtain recommendation from the Conservation Commission to the Planning Board for Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The Planning Board is meeting, tomorrow the 12th. Eversource will be installing grounding rings in the Right-of-Way #373 line. This involves multiple towns and will commence at Scobie Pond Road in Derry and go through Auburn, Chester and Deerfield.

The rings will be installed at the base of the existing wooden pole structures, 70 of which are in Chester, and are designed to protect equipment from lightning strikes which have damaged many. The previous grounds were pulling away from the wooden poles where stapled.

Mr. Cardin advised that a smaller excavator will be used and will cross existing trail systems when able.

Ms. Wilkins from Tighe-Bond advised that workers will be trained and briefed concerning species they should be looking out for. Ms. Munson asked if they would be performing the work

now in the Winter months when the ground is frozen and will be less invasive. Mr. Cardin advised they are starting in Derry and will get as much done before the ground is too frozen to work with and then start up again in the Spring. Chairman Myette stated it would most likely reach Chester in the Spring months when reptiles are just emerging.

Ms. Wilkins stated the black racer snake species tends to den around the wooden poles and while they have some mapped, if a racer is spotted after September in a trail, there is probably a den nearby that should be added to the map. Ms. Wilkins advised the black dotted marks are existing trails to be used and yellow are to be proposed. The yellow hatches shown on the plan will be where matting will be put down. Chairman Myette asked why they don't use the existing mats put down by the workers who are just finishing up the previous project (installing the pole structures). Mr. Cardin advised they are sourced to different competing companies.

Chairman Myette asked how long the project was expected to take? Mr. Cardin advised that the number of structures completed daily depends on the distance between structures, but they try to do 3-5 per day, so at least a month.

Mr. Chouinard asked the diameter of the rings? – approximately 36" halo around the poles.

Ms. Munson asked what they needed from Conservation? Mr. Cardin stated they would like recommendation letter for the Planning Board meeting tomorrow.

Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale motioned to approve the Planning Board project approval, 2nd by Mr. Chouinard, with all in favor, so moved.

Chairman Myette advised he will send out the letter to the Planning Board tomorrow.

Miscellaneous Business

Ms. Munson and Ms. Snyder attended Taking Action for Wildlife in a Changing Climate, in Laconia. Some workshops were discussed. Ms. Snyder recommended regular meetings with Planning Board and involving the Road Agent with culverts that will be beneficial to wildlife and water quality and the benefits of riparian buffers.

Ms. Snyder advised that she has scheduled the Coyote presentation with Chris Schadler for January 11, 2019 at the Multi-Purpose Room from 5:30 pm until 8:30 pm and hopes to have a meet and greet with the Conservation members with those attending at 5:30. Chairman Myette suggested posting it on the Town sign and notifying the school and possibly other local conservation commissions who may wish to attend. Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale recommended a short write-up in the Tri-Town. Donations will be accepted at the door. The snow date will be January 18, 2019.

Next Meeting: January 8, 2019.

Adjournment

Mrs. Neff-Ragsdale motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9 pm. Ms. Snyder seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer
Recording Secretary